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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PROPOSED SMALL BOAT HARBOR
SITES IN LAKE CITY MINNESOTA(U) CORPS OF ENGINEERS ST
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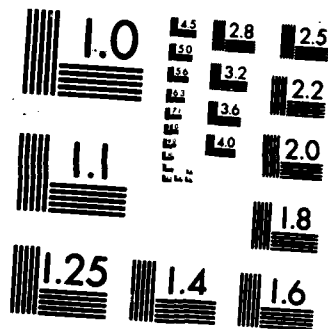
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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PROPOSED
SMALL BOAT HARBOR SITES IN
LAKE CITY, MINNESOTA

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PHILIP H. SALKIN
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ST. PAUL DISTRICT

1978

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FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	ARCHAEOLOGY		
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19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) The author conducted an archaeological survey of five possible small boat harbor sites in Lake City, Minnesota on the Mississippi River. The area was walked and a series of 53 test units were excavated. No archaeological materials were recovered. Construction of any of the small boat harbors would not pose a threat to the archaeological resources of the area.					
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In August, 1978, the author conducted an archaeological survey of five possible small boat harbor sites in Lake City, Minnesota. The project area is located in the extreme southeastern corner of Goodhue County and the extreme northeastern corner of Wabasha County(see Map #1).

The Lake City area is found in the floodplain of the Mississippi River approximately between Mile 770 and Mile 775. To the west are found a series of steep bluffs of limestone and sandstone with elevations of over 1100 feet, as opposed to the 680-700 foot elevation of the Lake City area(see Map #2). In general, the town is a very low, level area, in many cases less than 20 feet in elevation above the normal pool of the Mississippi. This area is in the Driftless Section of the Central Lowlands Province of the Mississippi. Lake City is located on Lake Pepin, a widening of the Mississippi caused by the formation of a delta by the faster-moving, sediment-laden Chippewa River. The vegetation in the area is of the general eastern deciduous forest type, dominated by such hardwoods as oaks, maples, elms, ashes, hickory and basswood.

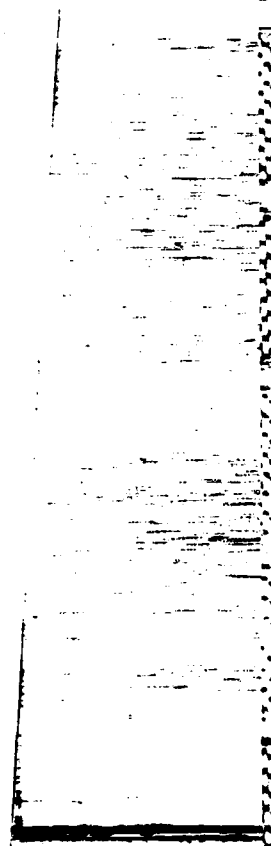
The project takes the form of five sites(see Maps 2 and 3). These sites, and their specific physical descriptions will be discussed separately.

Previous Archaeological Work

A review of the Minnesota Society files has indicated that



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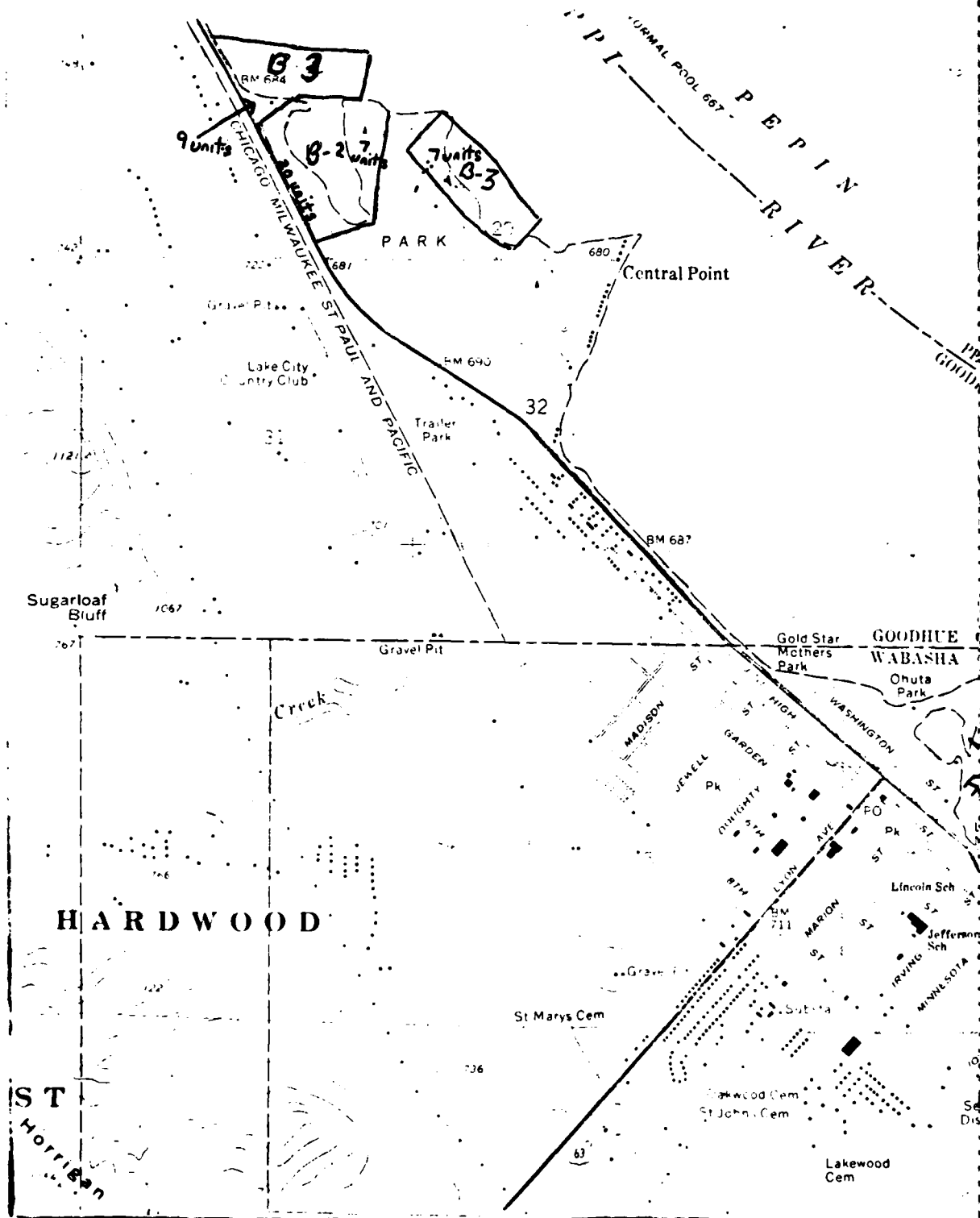
three mound groups are located within less than one mile of either the sites in Hok-si-la Park or Site C (U.S. Army Corp. Report 1978: 10). Located to the west, these sites are in higher, drier elevation of approximately 720-730 feet. While these sites will not be impacted by the proposed work, their presence nearby is an indication of possible sites in the project area. No historic sites eligible for the National Historic Register are in the vicinity of the proposed construction (ibid: 10).

Methods

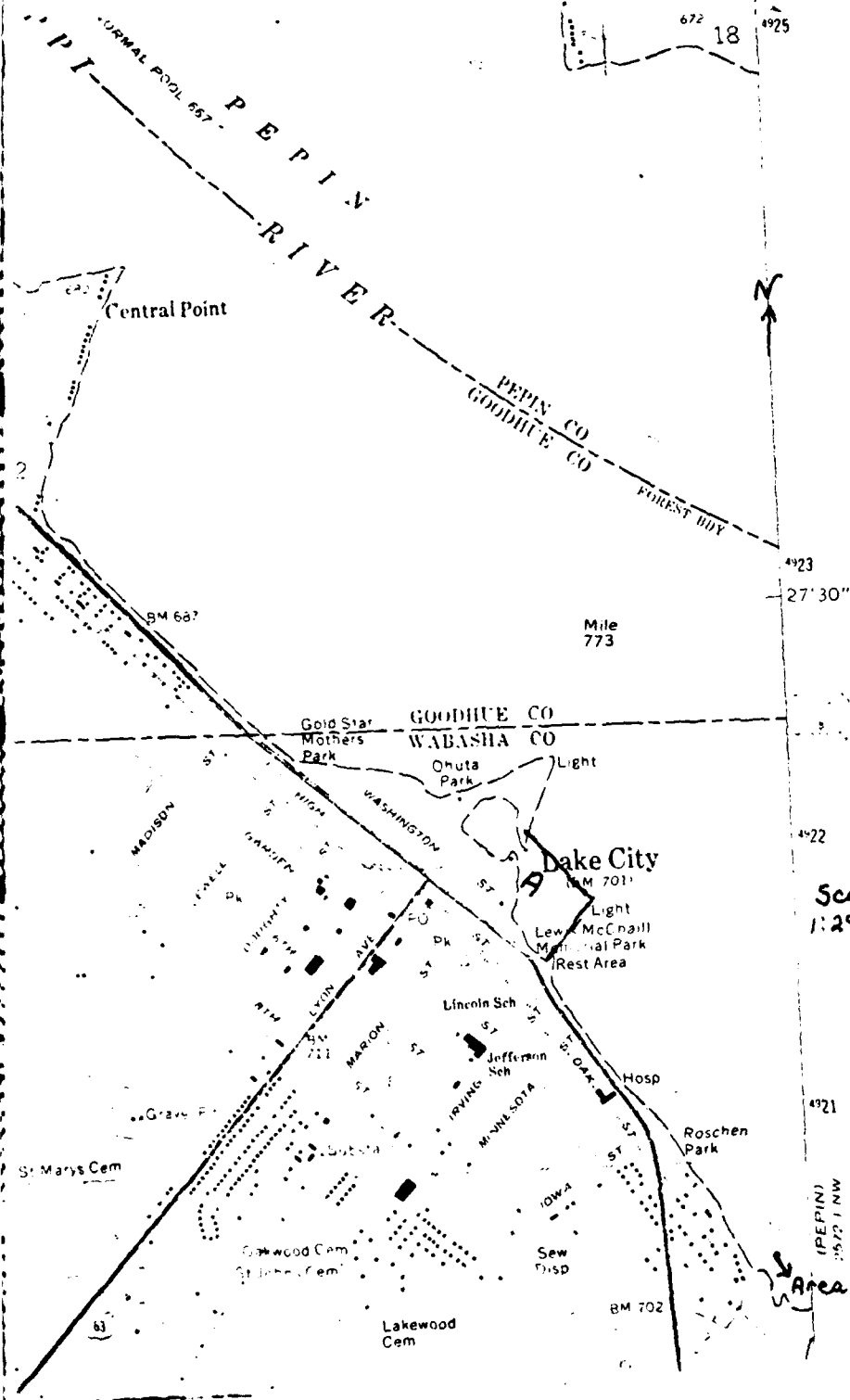
All of the proposed sites were walked. As will be further noted, several of the sites had various degrees of disturbance which would have had a serious effect on any existing archaeological sites. Other areas were very marshy or had standing water. In those areas not seriously disturbed, or too marshy to test, a series of 53 test units were excavated. These were a minimum of 50x50cm. in size. Careful note was taken of the soil horizons and their depths. Test units were excavated into what were considered to be archaeologically sterile horizons.

Site A

Site A is located in the N $\frac{1}{2}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 4, T111N, R12W of Wabasha County. It is approximately on Mile 773 of the Mississippi River. The elevation of the site is approximately 700 feet. The site is adjacent to the downtown area of Lake City



Map #2 - The Project Areas in Lake City with the Exception of Area C



Scale
1:24,000

Area C

ity with the Exception of

2

and is currently being utilized for a trailer park and marina area. As such, there is no original vegetation remaining, and the extant vegetation is limited to landscaped lawns and a few planted tress.

This portion of the project area is entirely and massively disturbed. This was verified by surface observation of the area, which was walked. As such, no test units were excavated, as the archaeological potential of the area, if there was any originally, has been entirely destroyed.

Sites E1, E2, E3

Sites E1, E2 and E3 are all located in Nok-si-la Park, a municipal park owned by Lake City. The project areas are in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 30 and a small part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 29, T112N, R12W, Goodhue County. The park takes the form of a peninsula jutting out into Lake Pepin at approximately mile 775 of the Mississippi River. The elevation is generally 680-685 feet.

Site E1

This site is located on the east-central shore of the park as it abutts lake Pepin. The area consists of a small terrace and a lower beach area. The soils are mostly Plainfield loamy sands with some Salida gravelly coarse sands and marsh soils (ibid: 27). The vegetation is primarily one of an open oak stand with brushy undergrowth. However, landscaping for various park structures and facilities has replaced much of the vegetation

with landscaped lawns.

A total of nine test units were excavated on the terrace area of this portion of the project area. This number was adequate for this limited area. No excavation units were placed on the beach which was both disturbed by public use and appears to consist of unstable sands of relatively recent origin. The soil profile in the test units consisted of an A Horizon 12-25cm. thick overlying a sandy B2 Horizon. The A Horizon in most of the units may have undergone some minor disturbance in the landscaping of the park. No archaeological materials were recovered.

Site B2

Site B2 is located on either side of a small lagoon which extends from the northwest into the park. This very low area primarily has alluvial or marshy soils. The vegetation cover is primarily a floodplain forest with spaced hardwoods. Much of the area is covered with marsh vegetation. Nettles form a significant part of the understory in the oak and beech hardwood stands. The site is bounded on the west by U.S. Highway 61. A park dirt road runs through the site.

The most western area of this site has been extensively disturbed by the construction of the highway. However, between this disturbance and the park road, a series of twenty test units were excavated. The soil profiles in these units consisted of a sandy A1 Horizon up to 25cm. thick(usually 10-15cm.) over-

lying an A2 Horizon down to a maximum depth of 56cm. These horizons overlay a usually somewhat damp, sandy E2 Horizon. No archaeological materials were recovered.

East of the lagoon, an additional eight units were excavated. This area was somewhat higher and drier. The soil profiles in the test units however, were very similar to that in the other twenty units on the west side of the lagoon. No archaeological materials were recovered.

Site E3

This site encompasses a small part of the northernmost section of the park. The westernmost section of this area has been disturbed in the construction of Highway 61. The remaining area has been somewhat modified by the landscaping of the park and the construction of a building. The soils are primarily alluvial. The vegetation is primarily landscaped lawns with remaining oaks and maples. A small section remains in the more original ground cover of a low floodplain forest with well-spaced hardwoods.

Seven test units were excavated in this small area. Most had an A1 Horizon 19-26cm. thick overlying an A2 Horizon to a maximum depth of 58cm. deep. These horizons overlie a sandy E Horizon. Several of the units had evidence of historic disturbance in the A1 Horizons. No archaeological materials were recovered.

Area C

Area C is located to the south of the other sites in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 9, T11N, R12W, Wabasha County. It is near

the approximate Mile 771 of the Mississippi River. The site is on the south bank of Miller Creek as it enters into the river. The soils of this area are primarily alluvial soils with a series of sandy loams also in the vicinity (ibid: 20-21). The survey yielded indications of recent flooding of this low area, with an elevation of approximately 680 feet. The vegetation cover is one of well-spaced willow, maple and oak. There is little understory.

A total of nine test units were excavated in Area C. The soil profiles showed a basic series of horizons of 10YA 6/2 sand and a gleyed silt. An example of one of these series of horizons is as follows:

- 0-8cm. deep - gleyed silt
- 8-20cm. deep - sand
- 20-33cm. deep - gleyed silt
- 33-45cm. deep - sand
- 45-50cm. deep - gleyed silt
- 50-54cm. deep - sand
- 54-62cm.+ deep - gleyed silt.

No archaeological materials were recovered.

Summation and Recommendations.

In August, 1978, the author conducted an archaeological survey of five potential small boat harbor sites in Lake City, Minnesota. The area was walked and a series of 53 test units were excavated. No archaeological materials were recovered. Most of the area is either low and swampy, or highly disturbed, conditions which would tend to lessen the archaeological potential of the area. Therefore, the author would suggest that the construction of a small boat harbor at any of the proposed sites would not pose any

threat to the archaeological resources of the area.

Curation

No archaeological materials were recovered during the course of the survey. Field notes are in the possession of the author.

END

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